



Neighborhood Meeting with City Council

Everest Neighborhoods

Submitted Questions/Comments (13)

Meeting Date: October 16, 2013



Public Works Department

1. We need a speed bump very badly to prevent accidents near the railroad underpass on Kirkland Way. When you are driving towards downtown on Kirkland Way, and attempt to turn left onto Railroad Avenue, the cars coming blind up the hill on Kirkland Way almost hit me every time. There is no way to see them. We need the speed bump on the downtown side of Kirkland Way before the turn to Kirkland Ave and Railroad Ave. I've almost been in a number of accidents here. Please do something to help residents who need to make this turn multiple times a day. It's actually worse during the day than at night, because at night you can see headlights and sometimes listen. It's a death waiting to happen; I hope you take this concern to heart.

Response: *Looking at the bridge and the intersections on both sides of it over the past 5 years (2008–2012) there have been 15 crashes; 3 turning crashes at Rail Road Avenue but 9 involved vehicles hitting the bridge. So although it's a tricky area, the crash experience at the intersections may be less than expected.*

Long term, the answer is a major project involving getting space under and around the bridge, both to eliminate the problem of vehicles hitting the bridge but also to provide areas for people to walk and bike on Kirkland Way. There will be an important connection to the Cross Kirkland Corridor at Railroad Avenue as well. As we consider redoing the bridge, improving the nearby intersections should also be part of the project. Hopefully the CKC can be catalyst to do this sooner than previously anticipated and hopefully this will be a project that can attract grant funding. Such a project is currently on the unfunded Capital Improvement Plan.

In the short term there may be a way to construct warning lights that allow drivers to know when vehicles are exiting Rail Road Avenue. This would probably be a fairly costly but we can put it on a list of potential projects. Given the volume of traffic on Kirkland Way, a speed hump is not a recommended treatment.

2. Blind spot coming south on South Slater @ Kirkland Ave as traffic coming up the hill does not need to stop and one has to be half way into the intersection before one can see anyone coming up the hill. Consider ""no parking"" on Kirkland Ave within 40 feet of the intersection? Similar situation with vehicles parked on Slater at intersection of south Slater and North. South bound vehicles have to go over onto the northbound lane. This makes them ""cut the corner"" onto North street and closely miss anyone coming down the hill on North even before the stop sign.

Response: *Trimming some of the landscaping in the northwest corner of the Slater/Kirkland intersection should help with this concern, we are requesting that the resident do this trimming. Iris Cabrera, Transportation Engineer at (425) 587-3866 or icabrerra@kirklandwa.gov is contacting the requestor to obtain additional information.*

3. Problem with increased Google traffic volumes on Kirkland Way @ 85th Street

Response: *Chuck Morrison works on signal engineering for the Public Works Department (425) 587-3868 or cmorrison@kirklandwa.gov and is contacting the requestor to obtain additional information about this question.*

4. Please continue the sidewalk from Ohde Avenue to Railroad Avenue along Kirkland Way. It is quite dangerous walking along the side of Kirkland Way where there is no sidewalk.

Response: Your idea has been added as a candidate for inclusion in the 2015-2020 [Citywide Capital Improvement Program](#). Starting in the spring 2014, City leaders will determine whether the idea you just submitted—as well as the ideas submitted by your fellow residents—warrant inclusion within the Capital Improvement Program. The City Council will adopt the 2015-2020 Capital Improvement Program as early as December 2014.

The Capital Improvement Program is Kirkland's plan for improvements and maintenance of its transportation systems including streets, sidewalks, and intersections. The City Council reviews, updates and adopts the Capital Improvement Program every two years.

Please check the City's [Capital Improvement Program web site](#) for more information about public involvement opportunities. You can also stay involved with your neighborhood association, which can be an effective conduit for promoting your capital improvement ideas. Visit kirklandwa.gov for neighborhood association meeting dates and contact information.

Also, check out the new Capital Improvement Program [interactive map](#). The map displays all existing Capital Improvement Program projects. Using your computer or select mobile device, you can explore all existing or planned projects to learn status, details, funding and even communicate directly with the project's manager. The "Suggest a Project" feature helps citizens voice their ideas for future projects to be considered by the Capital Improvement Program during the update process.

5. The city is allowing a lot of construction down the 6th St. S. corridor between NE 68th St. and Kirkland Ave. As a resident here since 2005 I've seen 6th St S become worse and worse over the years with no action by the city. The city is permitting construction companies to tear up the roads for utility work (presumed) but there is no effort to ensure a quality job when repairing and repaving. The road has become almost un-drivable with dips and rises due to all the patches in the road. I see that 108th Ave NE south of NE 68th just was repaved. The city needs to do the same for 6th St. S. As a motorcycle rider it is nearly hazardous now to ride on 6th St. S as my wife and I have to ride in the middle of the road to avoid the road patchwork. What is the city doing to improve its inspections regarding the quality of the repairing of road sections that have been ripped up? As far as I can tell there is none. What is the plan to repave 6th St. S? It needs to be done before something happens.

Response: We are planning to repave the portion of 6th Street South you are commenting about, but are waiting until after a water main is installed between Kirkland Avenue to about 420 6th Street South in 2016. This avoids tearing up relatively new paving. Thank you for the comment on patches; using permit fee revenues the City has recently hired an inspector who's primary responsibility includes making sure these street repairs are done properly. If you find anything posing an immediate hazard (e.g. pot holes) please contact the Public Works Street Division at (425) 587-3900.

6. Kirkland is promoting its efforts to be more “green.” On the City’s webpage, I do not see any mention of increased recycling. I have noticed that parks in Bellevue have recycling containers next to each garbage can but we (Kirkland), don’t have recycling in our parks. Everest Park especially, has a large number of visitors and it’s frustrating to see all the cans and bottles thrown in the garbage because there are no recycling options. Would the city consider making the installation of recycling containers next to each garbage can at parks and public locations a priority? Also, the increase in the cost of extra yard waste recycling has impacted many of us greatly. We would appreciate it if this fee could be reduced – is there a possibility that this rate could be re-negotiated in the future?"

Response: *In recognition of the lack of recycling option in public locations, in 2011 Solid Waste installed 24 “Big Belly” recycling containers in the Central Business District. Kirkland Parks & Community Service Department has tried recycling at various locations throughout the Parks system. The challenge with trying to facilitate recycling is all the contamination that occurs. Unless there is continual monitoring it is extremely hard to get compliance.*

We have been fortunate over the past several years to have some wonderful volunteers help us at Everest during the Little League World Series event. Through their help we have been able to recycle a considerable amount of the cans and bottles. In addition we have partnered with Kirkland American Little League who utilizes Everest during their season to provide recycling for the concession stand and the bleacher area surrounding it.

We recognize that the new charge for yard waste extras has been a challenge for some of our residents. During the 2013-2014 solid waste rates adoption process, the City Council decided, for the first time, to begin charging for residential yard waste extras. The decision was made largely due to cost as the free extras were costing the Solid Waste Utility around \$150,000 per year but was also based upon the “industry standard” where all other cities in King County except Kirkland were charging their residents in some fashion for extra yard waste. Kirkland Solid Waste does not make any money on the extra charges and what we bill each customer per 32 gallon extra (\$5.07 each) is exactly what we pay Waste Management for collection and processing of the organic material. We strongly encourage our residents to consider subscribing to a second yard waste cart particularly during the spring growing season and the fall leaf season. The additional 96 gallon yard waste cart costs \$12.92 each and is picked up weekly as opposed to the yard waste extras that are charged per extra unit. Customers can call Waste Management at 1-800-592-9995 anytime to request a second yard waste cart. Solid Waste will be starting its 2015-2016 solid waste rate analysis in the second quarter of 2014 during which the City Council will have the opportunity to re-evaluate its solid waste rate structure and fees which could include maintaining, reducing, or eliminating charges for extra yard waste.

Planning and Community Development Department

7. There is a perception that the neighborhoods and residents are ignored in regards to planning and zoning that may impact residents' quality of life. This was recently felt in the Everest Neighborhood when the zoning change was proposed for the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center last fall. Everest residents responded with hundreds of emails to the Council and Planning Department expressing their frustrations regarding traffic congestion and safety. Several months later, when Google Phase II planning occurred (in which the building would be located in Moss Bay, but all the traffic would be routed through Everest), the City did not reach out to Everest to inform them of the potential impact. What are you doing to improve outreach and make sure you get comprehensive feedback from all impacted neighborhoods?

Response: *The project to revise the zoning for the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center was a "legislative" issue (enactment of a law to a development proposal) for which the City had a great deal of discretion. The City acknowledged the concerns of Everest Neighborhood residents and suspended the project pending review of the Comprehensive Plan, which we are now doing.*

The Google expansion was reviewed as an administrative matter (application of a law to a permit application, wherein the expansion was required to be reviewed under adopted regulations. Among the zoning regulations that apply to the expansion is a requirement that access must come from the east, via 6th Street South, rather than from the west along 7th Ave South. The developer also attended meetings of both the Everest and Moss Bay Neighborhood Associations to discuss the project.

One area where there was some discretion was the SEPA (State Environmental Policies Act) review for environmental impacts. In that regard, the City used two extensive email lists of residents (the list for the Kirkland Alliance of Neighborhoods and the list for the Cross Kirkland Corridor) to solicit input. Required impact mitigations include two new traffic signals (at 6th St. and Kirkland Way and at 6th Street South and 9th Av. South) and sidewalk extensions along 6th Street South and 7th Ave South. All of these mitigations will benefit residents of the Everest Neighborhood.

8. The Growth Management Act requires us to increase density in Kirkland.
- With large residential areas taking up much of city, exactly where do you see density increasing (besides Totem Lake), and in what form?
 - What specific density increases do you foresee for the Everest Neighborhood in the next 10 and 20 years?
 - After last year's discussion, what specific changes to the Houghton Everest Neighborhood Center does the Council envision?

Response: *Under current zoning, the largest increases in both employment and housing will likely occur in Totem Lake and Moss Bay (downtown). Those areas will continue to redevelop with taller structures and residential development will be mostly multi-family.*

In Everest, 1,123 new employees and 209 new dwelling units are forecast, with most new housing being multi-family.

In the portion of the business district south of NE 68th St., the City will have to revise the zoning to reflect the most recently adopted Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan which calls for mixed use, pedestrian oriented development, and buildings stepping up to five stories. There are no specific plans for changes in the portion of the business district north of NE 68th St. in the Everest Neighborhood. However, as part of the Comprehensive Plan update, the Planning Commission has

indicated a desire to review the role of all neighborhood business districts in accommodating future growth. The City encourages citizens and neighborhoods to be involved in the Comprehensive Plan update process.

9. As you are aware, our Neighborhood Plan has not been updated in 25 years. Last fall, when it was proposed that the zoning for the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center be changed to 5 stories, it was mentioned by many people at the City that our Neighborhood Plan was very old and it was implied that it was not relevant because it was so old. We see our Neighborhood Plan as a way to express our goals for the neighborhood as well as protect us from zoning that is out of character, yet we do not have a commitment from the city that we can update our plan. What kind of commitment will you make to us regarding allowing us to update our neighborhood plan?

Response: *As noted, the City has not been able to keep up with neighborhood planning and many of the plans are out of date. With the annexation of three more large neighborhoods, keeping the plans current will be even more difficult. The City Council and Planning Commission have discussed this and agree that a more efficient and affordable method for neighborhood planning should be established. This issue will be discussed further during the current Comprehensive Plan update process.*

10. It is not healthy for a city to grow beyond its capacity to absorb people. We need to revisit the state Growth Management Act to allow a neighborhood to declare itself at capacity so that it cannot be rezoned to permit additional population density. Will the Kirkland City Council back a measure in the state Legislature to revise the GMA?

Response: *The City has long supported the basic tenants of the Growth Management Act. Consistent with the GMA, the City supports the need for coordinating planning within the Seattle metropolitan area and accepting a fair share of regional growth.*

Police Department

11. There does not seem to be any speed limit enforcement on 8th Street South in the Everest Park area. The posted limit is 15 MPH. There are 4 speed bumps in this area. I live near one of those speed bumps. In the morning commute when people are trying to get to work and school this is a speed way to hasten peoples commute. The same thing in the afternoon commute the other way. This is transitional area with many younger families that live here and come here for the park. This is a dangerous situation. In over six years I have never seen a patrol car or a ticket issued. Some vehicles hit the bumps so hard it rattles our house. Another area that needs attention is 9th Street South and Railroad Avenue where they intersect Kirkland Way. Cars are speeding West and North to get to Central Way. The posted speed limit is 25 MPH. Another dangerous intersection. You can issue as many tickets as you can write. My question is why is this not a priority? Does there need to be more accidents and injuries? Do close calls count at all?

Response: *The police department does conduct patrols along this stretch of roadway as it is adjacent to Everest Park however not a lot of infractions are written along this stretch. The vehicle speed of 15 MPH posted on the orange diamond signs at each end of 8th St S and with a playground sign near the Park ball fields entrance are warning signs with the suggested speed limit of 15 mph (similar to what you see at sharp corners or near traffic humps or traffic circles). The actual enforceable speed limit on 8th St S. is 25mph. A check with the Police Traffic Division did not show a record of this being an ongoing traffic complaint zone. A request has been forwarded to the Traffic Division to have officer's monitor traffic in this area during the morning and evening commute times to further assess driver behaviors along this section of roadway.*

12. What can be done about the increase of homeless people in our area? There is a man living behind the Everest sign on 6th St. S. What do we know about his mental health status?

Response: *City Human Service staff works with other cities, the county and churches to coordinate efforts to help those in need. Kirkland provides funding for an overnight Eastside Winter Shelter, a Men's and Women's Day Center and several other shelter, transitional and permanent housing programs for men, women, families and youth. Kirkland funds non-profit organizations that work with homeless individuals and families. City staff regularly participates in regional discussions with King County (10-year Plan to End Homelessness), the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee (EHAC), The Eastside Human Services Forum (EHSF) and other regional planning efforts that work to end homelessness in our region.*

The cities of Redmond, Bellevue, and Kirkland recently came together to provide funding for a pilot project (Eastside Outreach to the Homeless) that will provide homeless outreach services in our communities. At a minimum, this program will be able to respond to calls to serve homeless individuals and respond by engaging and connecting individuals to resources in a timely way. The pilot period will run through December 31, 2014. The homeless gentleman in question has already been contacted by this new program. If you have questions regarding any of these efforts, please contact Sharon Anderson Sanderson@kirklandwa.gov.

It is important to remember that being homeless is not a crime. When Kirkland police officers do have a lawful purpose to contact homeless individuals they are referred to available resources for food and shelter such as local food banks, the Eastside tent city and other surrounding area shelter locations. Those that are found on private property are asked to move along and most voluntarily comply with such request. With those that appear to be in need of mental health assistance officers determine if they are an immediate threat to themselves or others, absent an evidence of those criteria they are referred to agencies that can provide that service and/or, those services are summoned to make contact with them as in the case of the mobile crisis team. It is the individual's choice whether they wish to utilize those resources. As for the homeless gentleman that is often found behind the Everest Sign, in past contacts with Kirkland police officer's he has been determined to not be an immediate threat to himself or others and has been referred to available resources.

General Comment

13. Reminder via Mayor's letter/Utility Bill insert about Kirkland City Ordinance regarding leashing of dogs and picking up dog feces. It is a health hazard/lake water contaminant and unsanitary to have unpicked up dog feces splatter all over the lawn when the lawn is inadvertently mowed after someone lets their dog out to defecate on our front lawn.